



## INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS: COURSE DESIGN & TEACHING GUIDELINES

The IISL's International Master's in Sociology of Law consists of two components.

1. First, students attend intensive courses from the last week of September to the last week of March. Students will have two assessment periods for each subject. The ordinary call will take place at the end of the course and the extraordinary call will be in May, from 5 to 15 May.  
Students may waive the assessment period, which will result in a grade of not presented or not passed. Those assessment periods with a grade of No-show will not be counted for the purposes of the number of assessment periods taken.
2. Secondly, students work on their Master's thesis projects at the end of the academic year and will be entitled to two official calls in each academic year, the first call in July and the second in September.

Students who have not defended or have failed their work in the calls established for the academic year must re-enrol in the following academic year.

The following guidelines provide information concerning the teaching of the coursework component of the programme. There are separate guidelines for Master's thesis supervisors and examiners, concerning the supervision of the thesis research and the grading of the thesis.

For teachers in our programme, the following two documents are likewise relevant:

- *Programme structure and learning outcomes:* This document contains a description of the contents, structure and objectives of the overall programme and the different modules. This will help you link your course with the respective module it is allocated to and put it into the broader context and perspective of the one-year Master's degree.
- *Course programme of the relevant academic year:* This document lists the specific courses and the modules they are allocated to for each academic year together with the names and affiliations of the visiting faculty and their respective teaching periods. The course programme varies from year to year within the structure of the overall programme.

These documents will be sent to you by the Master Coordination Team and they can also be found on our homepage.<sup>1</sup> The broader framework is set by the accreditation documents,<sup>2</sup> the regulations for Master's programmes by the University of the Basque Country (EHU),<sup>3</sup> with which this programme is linked, as well as the respective Basque and Spanish regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iisj.net/en/socio-legal-master/presentation>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ehu.eus/en/web/master/master-sociology-of-law/accreditation>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ehu.eus/en/web/masterrak-eta-graduondokoak/university-masters-degrees/regulation/regulation-upv-ehu>



The Master Coordination Team ([master@iisj.es](mailto:master@iisj.es)) is your first point of contact in all kinds of questions which these guidelines do not or insufficiently address and will gladly support you. They may also request you to fill in a form to provide some basic data, if you have not done so in the process of submitting a teaching proposal,<sup>4</sup> and request from you confirmation regarding the arrangements of your stay.

### **Cohort size and course language**

Our intake of regular Master's degree students is presently at 15 per year. In addition, there may be a small number of students taking single courses or a double degree. Typically, there are no more than 15 to 20 students in class, which allows for close interaction with the teacher.

The course language is English. Students will have a proficiency in English, but their proficiency can vary. In exceptional cases a professor may agree to accept a written assignment in another language. Such cases need to be discussed with the Scientific Director beforehand.

### **Teaching hours and student workload**

A course worth 3 ECTS typically consists of ten teaching sessions of two hours each given over a period of two weeks (Monday to Friday, i.e., ten working days), adding up to 20 contact hours in class. One-week courses on methods worth 1,5 ECTS run over half of that period (five working days). Variations of this formula are possible. The exact time slots for teaching will be agreed upon with the Master Coordination Team and in consultation with the Scientific Director.

Teachers are expected to be available also beyond these teaching hours and give advice to interested students. We kindly ask you to set aside 1 hour per day from Monday to Friday for potential meetings, whether on-site or, in special circumstances, if the teacher or student is not in Oñati, also online. This time can be used to discuss students' course assignments or the development of their Master's thesis proposals (see the section on thesis research, supervision and examination below) or any topics relevant to the teacher's area of expertise.

3 ECTS translate into 75 hours of work for students in a two-week course, of which 20 hours are spent in class and a little more in consultation with the teacher. The remaining 55 hours should be divided between reading and preparing for class (about 40 hours, or 4 hours per day), and coursework assignments (about 15 hours in total).

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.iisj.net/en/master-oficial/master%E2%80%99s-course-proposals>



## **Learning activities and assignments**

Given the relatively small cohort of students, classes can be very interactive. Teachers may want to give short presentations or lectures at the beginning of the class and otherwise rely on the preparatory readings, videos or else, as a means to provide the students with inputs before class. The time in class can then be used in a way to actively engage the students through individual or group exercises and discussions about the material or perspectives provided. Teachers are encouraged to reserve sufficient time for such learning activities and students' own contributions.

Reading assignments for each session should not exceed **40-45 pages** (e.g., a chapter of a book, one long article, or two shorter ones). The required readings shall be made available to the students on the electronic learning platform of the institute (Moodle; further information below). Course teachers may also recommend additional readings, which are not compulsory to read. These readings should be useful to students when they want to expand their knowledge on certain topics, or when they prepare for discussing certain topics in an assignment. Non-compulsory readings are also made available on the electronic learning platform (Moodle).

Further assignments may include oral presentations, short written responses to readings, preparation of individual questions for plenary discussions, preparation of an individual part in a debate or role-play, short quizzes, etc. At the end of each course, students are usually expected to submit an essay of 1,500 to 3,000 words to the electronic learning platform (Moodle) on a subject agreed upon with the teacher of that course.

## **Attendance requirements and deadlines**

Face-to-face attendance to course units is mandatory and, in general terms, only those who can accredit full participation in the course and pass the relevant assessments will be able to pass the subjects at the first call. Students who do not accredit this participation must be assessed at the second call.

In the event that a student is unable to attend a specific academic activity of the course, he/she should notified in advance the course teacher and the Master's staff (e.g. by email), whenever possible. In the light of good reasons that may justify the absence and its exceptional character, an automatic pass to the second call may be excepted.

The IISL will no offer the option of opening a Zoom meeting for a student's absences, but in the event that coincidentally the course is to be retransmitted online, it may be followed by the student, but this does not validate the fulfilment of the obligation to attend in person.

Active participation during teaching hours and in class-related learning activities is required to successfully pass the course modules. This includes, among others, studying the assigned readings, taking part in course exercises and discussions, and submitting required assignments in time.



The course teacher will evaluate the student's participation in the development of the subject and may penalise absences, passive attitudes in the classroom or failure to complete previous readings or work.

### Assessment

There is no set template for assessment; instead, assessment should be adapted to the individual course format and be aligned with the planned learning activities. Formally, active participation in class (e.g., contributions to the discussion or small exercises in class) has to make up at least 10% of the total grade.

Examples of previous types and combinations of assessment include:

- Active participation in class (10%), oral presentation (30%), essay of 2,500 words (60%);
- Active participation in class (10%), learning diary consisting of notes on readings and class discussions (2,000 words, 45%), essay of 2,000 words (45%);
- Active participation in class (10%), group exercise, with all members of a group given the same grade (45%), essay of 2,000 words (45%);
- Active participation in class (10%), oral presentation (25%), written exam taken on the last day of the course (65%)
- Active participation in class (10%), essay of 4000 words (90%).

Teachers have to specify their assessment scheme in the course outline presented to the students in the first session of the course. It then cannot be changed anymore throughout the course.

The **deadline** for submitting final course essays is always 23:00 o'clock (11:00 pm) of the Saturday following the conclusion of the respective course. Please enforce this deadline in your own course. Extensions should only be given in exceptional circumstances and be agreed with the Scientific Director. The deadline allows students to enjoy a free Sunday before the beginning of the next course and start afresh. This free day is essential, considering the intensive nature of this Master's programme.

### Using the Spanish grading scale

According to the Spanish grading scale, the grade awarded to a student should be a numerical grade out of 10, with 5.0 being the passing mark.

There is no direct equivalence between the Spanish grading scale and the ECTS grading scale (European Credit Transfer System). However, this table may give international teachers some orientation in grading Master's students' assignments according to the Spanish grading scale.



Spanish Grading Scale		ECTS Grading Scale		
<i>Grade</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Description</i>
Sobresaliente (SB)	9.0-10.0	A	10%	Excellent – outstanding performance with only minor errors
Notable (NT)	8.5-8.9	B	25%	Very good – above the average standard but with some errors
	7.0-8.4	C	30%	Good – generally sound work with a number of notable errors
Aprobado (AP)	6.0-6.9	D	25%	Satisfactory – fair but with significant shortcomings
	5.0-5.9	E	10%	Sufficient – performance meets the minimum criteria
Suspenso (SS)	2.5-4.9	FX		Fail – some more work is required before the credit can be awarded
	0.0-2.4	F		Fail – considerable further work is required

Based on our experience and as an orientation for teachers, this means that about a third of the students may reach an A (“sobresaliente”) or a B (“notable alta”) in a course or a Master’s thesis. This is a realistic expectation, even if your grading practice does not follow the logic of ranking the students along their performance expected to show a so-called normal distribution.

Theoretically, about another third would attain a C (“notable baja”) and the last third would reach a D or E (“aprobado”). In practice, the distribution may look a bit different, and this is fine. In the end, the ranking of students in class, if needed to calculate equivalences, will follow the actual distribution of grades. We just have to ensure sufficient consistency in expectations and actual grading across the programme.

Please try to adjust to the Spanish grading scale based on this guidance. It may be that your own national system is either more generous or stricter in awarding best grades. If some students’ performance is in the top ten percent of a cohort, they should be awarded a grade between 9.0 and 10.0 (~A). If their work is clearly above average but still shows some deficiencies, they should get 8.5 or a little above (~B), and so on. If some students’ performance is just sufficient to pass the course, their grade should be 5.0 or 5.5.



Normally, grades should be a whole or half integer (i.e., 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10; or 5.5, 6.5 etc.), unless there is a very good reason for a more subtle variation (e.g., 6.8), such as when different assessment components are weighted in the final grade or a ranking of students seems appropriate.

### **Final assessment and failed subjects**

The grading of course essays submitted at the end of the course should be completed **within two weeks**. Please provide written feedback on the essays, as your comments are vital for the students to improve their performance and understand your grading criteria.

If students fail a course module after the last assessment is completed, they will have a chance to make up for this during the second call in the course programme in May.

As there are formal arrangements for failed subjects (“second call” in the same year), the respective arrangements have to be agreed with the Master Coordination Team and to be approved by the Scientific Director.

### **Avoiding and countering plagiarism**

It is the responsibility of visiting faculty members to discourage and detect plagiarism in their courses. We encourage you to follow up with students on dubitable working practices, which at this stage may still be a matter of carelessness, as they may not had much sufficient instruction on that in their bachelor degree. Students will receive citation and referencing training in the thesis seminar but, as we all know, academic writing requires practice, which they develop throughout the different courses.

We recommend the use of anti-plagiarism software, even though this usually only captures more blatant cases. The University of the Basque Country (EHU) provides access to Turnitin, which has to be requested using the EHU university email address,<sup>5</sup> which visiting faculty may activate as well. If you have access to anti-plagiarism software via your home university, this may be a simple alternative. The EHU also lists some free platforms which can be used to scan essays for plagiarism.<sup>6</sup>

If there is clear evidence that a student has committed plagiarism, the assignment (essay or Master thesis) becomes invalid. According to EHU regulations, the student has the right to once more

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<sup>5</sup> An email has to be sent to: [antiplagio.bib-uni@ehu.eus](mailto:antiplagio.bib-uni@ehu.eus), in which the teachers are to include their full name, their EHU email address, and the EHU centre they are affiliated with via the Master’s programme (Gipuzkoa, Facultad de Derecho). The Master Coordination Team will support you with this, if need be.

<sup>6</sup> Viper: <http://gateway.scanmyessay.com/index.php>; Plagiarism Checker: <http://www.dustball.com/cs/plagiarism.checker/>; Plagium: <http://www.plagium.com/>; ArticleChecker: <http://www.articlechecker.com/>; Antiplagiarist: <http://antiplagiarist.software.informer.com/>.



submit a new assignment, be it a newly written essay or the Master thesis. The deadline for this (“second call”) will be determined by the teacher in consultation with the Scientific Director.

### **Unauthorised use of AI-based software**

At the IISL, the use of **ChatGPT or other AI-based software** by students, e.g., in preparing essays, is generally not allowed. Exceptions may be made by teachers who explicitly permit the use of ChatGPT or other AI-based software as an exercise. However, as a default these are considered as unauthorised aids. This specifically concerns any use of text-generative software in examinations and performance components that count into the grade, even if the text as such is revised by the student. If you have good reasons to apply a different policy in your own course, please inform the Scientific Director about this, and be very explicit to the students that this policy is exceptional to your course and does not affect the rule that AI-based generative tools are considered as unauthorised means in (all) other courses as well as in the thesis-writing process.

### **Course contents, good practices, and diversity**

To plan the contents of your course, please take into account the *Programme structure and learning outcomes* (separate file, see above). This helps you connect your course with the respective module it forms part of and avoid overlaps with other courses and modules.

We welcome material relating to your own research, but please keep in mind that your course should also provide a general overview of the topic. For that purpose, it should include different perspectives, approaches, and debates which had an impact on the field, even if you are critical of them.

Please also pay attention to at which stage of the course programme you will be teaching. You can check the *Course programme of the relevant academic year* (separate file, see above) to get a better idea of what the students may know already and how your course contributes to the overall build-up of the programme.

Our students come from a wide range of geographical, cultural, academic, and professional backgrounds, and we ask you to bear this diversity in mind in selecting material and preparing the learning activities of your course. Many students are likely to have a first degree in law, but may have little knowledge of theories and research in social science, while some may have studied little or no law, but have more experience in social science perspectives and methodology.

In general, we expect a student-centred approach to teaching drawing on modern pedagogical principles. See the “Seven Principles of Good Practice in Teaching” for inspiration.<sup>7</sup> The IISL is

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<sup>7</sup> There are many versions available on the internet; see for instance: <https://www.utc.edu/academic-affairs/walker-center-for-teaching-and-learning/online-resources/seven-principles-for-good-teaching>).



strongly committed to respect for and to protection of gender, religious, and cultural diversity. Any incident of inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour will be followed up by the IISL leadership, who may inform local authorities in consultation with the affected student or staff.

In terms of increasing awareness of ethical questions in social science and research, please draw on available codes of ethics and materials and integrate them, where suitable, in your course materials.<sup>8</sup> In the interest of neutrality, please do not invite students to participate in any publication project of yours during the course period. Excellent essays should be recommended for publication in the journal *Sortuz*, published by the IISL.

### **Public lecture or guest speaker**

You may consider turning a lesson of your course (e.g. 60 or 90 minutes) into a public lecture, have a panel discussion, or a Q&A session with a guest speaker. This special event could be opened to a broader audience, made accessible online and advertised to members of the IISL scholarly and professional network. Our former students and visiting researchers from all over the world appreciate staying in touch and remaining part of our international community by such events, which may be low-threshold but are often high-profile in their scholarly quality.

### **Course evaluation**

Students will be asked to provide an anonymous evaluation of the course instructor and learning activities. Students should always complete the student survey **on the last day of the course** through the EHU platform called [eGela](#).. The courses taught at the IISL will appear on this platform and the teacher will activate the survey block so that students can fill it in.

If the teacher wants to receive the result of the evaluation of his/her course, should check GAUR platform to visualize it. If your subject is within the first term of teaching, you will be able to visualize the results of the survey in GAUR from mid-February onwards. But if your subject is in the second term, you will have to wait until the end of July to be able to visualize them in GAUR. If you need to have them before this date, you will have to request them directly e/she should contact directly the Teaching Evaluation Service of the EHU at the following email address: [serv.evaluacion@ehu.es](mailto:serv.evaluacion@ehu.es).

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<sup>8</sup> E.g., Code of Ethics of the International Sociological Association: <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/about-isa/code-of-ethics>; “Ethics on the Web – A Brief Guide to Resources”, website by the Association of Social Anthropologists in the UK: <https://www.theasa.org/ethics/ethnav/six>.



Some open suggestions for teachers from previous years include:

- Required readings should be discussed in class so that students can understand how the reading links to the topic.
- Class discussions should be managed in such a way that they are not dominated by the most eloquent students. A suggested method is to include questions on the reading lists and assign specific students the day before to prepare answers. In this way, students not so fluent in English can prepare their interventions in class and thus gain confidence.
- Use of PowerPoint slides is especially appreciated by students from non-English backgrounds. Students also appreciate the slides being made available prior to class.

### **Thesis research, supervision and examination**

Parallel to the individual courses taught by visiting faculty, the Scientific Director offers a permanent thesis research seminar, which provides students with the opportunity to reflect on research design and methodology, and to develop a proposal for their thesis research projects. The thesis seminar works as a supplement to the individual courses and ends with the last course in March. By then, students are also expected to submit their thesis research proposals, which are assessed and graded by the Scientific Director.

From April onwards, students will work on their Master's thesis projects under the guidance of individual supervisors, who will be selected by the Scientific Director, in consultation with the students, from past and present teachers and the international network of the IISL. As visiting faculty, you are thus very much welcome to supervise the Master's thesis of one or more of our students if this is in your field of interest and expertise. You may also become an external thesis examiner for one or more Master's theses that you have not supervised yourself. In addition, students are likely to have a tutor who is a teacher linked in a more stable way to the regular academic activities of the IISL.

Students work on their Master's thesis projects at the end of the academic year and will be entitled to two official calls in each academic year, the first call in July and the second in September.

During your teaching period, students may actively seek your advice about their first ideas regarding a thesis project, and they may be eager to explore topics related to these in assignments in your course. Since finding a suitable topic and developing an approach may be a time-consuming process, we encourage both students and teachers to make use of these opportunities. Of course, you can also point to possible thesis topics in your course.

### **Technical and electronic equipment**

The seminar room at the IISL is equipped with a laptop, projector/screen and speakers, as well as a whiteboard and flip-chart, and other equipment may be made available if needed.



Teaching materials are shared via the electronic learning platform Moodle, to which teachers and students are given access, and teachers with editing rights. This allows you to directly up- and download materials (e.g., class readings, course essays). The Master Coordination Team will provide guidance on how to use this platform and support you in practical questions if need be.

The readings you are going to use in your course should at best be available by the end of July before the course programme starts in September. Since we may have to acquire some missing literature, you will be asked early on about the readings you would like to use. Please contact the Master Coordination Team if other arrangements are required.

Coursework is submitted exclusively via Moodle. The students are asked to submit their essays in two formats: pdf and docx, which the teachers can then download on their own. If you would like to comment directly in the files, you can either use the editing function in pdf files or the review and track-changes function in docx files. In addition or alternatively, you can insert your feedback comment for each student into a textbox or upload a file in Moodle.

Please do not use emails to make course announcements, communicate grades or feedback, but include these directly to Moodle. For other exchange, you may use emails, but try to use the students' official EHU email addresses, which they have to get used to also for other purposes.

### **Online or dual teaching format**

This master's degree is taught in face-to-face mode.

Exceptional circumstances may arise on the part of the professor or isolated students in which offering an online or dual teaching format for a limited period may be a preferable option to canceling or postponing the course, but IISL will not offer the option of opening a Zoom meeting for a student's absences.

Only in the event that the course is eventually rebroadcast online, it can be followed by the student, but this does not validate the fulfillment of the obligation of face-to-face attendance.

### **Other forms of misconduct**

The IISL Code of Ethics promotes attitudes and behaviors that have their central vector in ethics and integrity, both at the institutional and individual level, of the different individuals that make up the university community.

IISL is firmly committed to respecting and protecting gender, religious and cultural diversity. Any incidents of inappropriate and unprofessional behavior by faculty, staff or students in this regard will be followed up by IISL Management, which may take further action, such as informing local authorities in consultation with the individuals concerned.

Serious cases of students' misbehaviours that occur in class or outside shall be reported to and will be addressed by the Scientific Director, who can decide on appropriate sanctions. This may – in



severe cases and after consultation with the students' representatives – include requiring a student to move out of the Residence or excluding the student from the Masters' programme.

The EHU has a [protocol](#) to prevent gender-based violence. The purpose of this protocol is to maintain and promote a safe environment, free from genderbased violence, for all people comprising the university community of the University of the Basque Country (EHU). The EHU shall not tolerate any form of gender-based violence and will take the necessary measures to tackle and eradicate such attitudes and behaviours once and for all.

In the process of activation of the protocol, there will be a competent body for the implementation of the protocol. This committee will be formed by a person expert in equality, a person from the EHU Prevention Service, a person from the Psychological Support Service and the EHU Security Director. When the complainant has an employment relationship with the EHU, a trade union representative will also join the committee. The members of the committee will receive specific training on gender violence. The committee will be coordinated by the EHU's equality technician. You can find also information about this protocol in Moodle clicking on this [link](#).

Furthermore, in the University Student Statute that the EHU mentions on its [website](#), we can find the figure of the University Ombudsman ([also in Moodle](#)).

In accordance with the provisions of the fourteenth additional provision of Organic Law 6/2001, in order to ensure respect for the rights and freedoms of professors, students and administration and services staff, in the face of the actions of the different university bodies and services, the universities will establish the figure of the University Ombudsman in their organizational structure. Their actions, always directed towards the improvement of university quality in all areas, shall not be subject to the imperative mandate of any university body and shall be governed by the principles of independence and autonomy.